

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

PRE/A

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NDB 6-18-02

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
September 21, 2001

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Box PCT
Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

The Replacement Pages accompanying the PCT International Preliminary Examination Report (IPER) show changes to the specification and claims with handwritten notations. No retyped replacement pages were provided. Under the assumption these notations are unacceptable in United States practice, this Preliminary Amendment will use as a base document the amended description which was an annex to a letter dated 5 March 2001 to the European Patent Office. The subsequent hand-written changes accompanying the IPER will be included through this Preliminary Amendment using the standard amendment practice of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.